



PSAC North Files Complaint Against Coral Harbour Housing Authority with the Canada Industrial Relations Board



Media Release: For Immediate Release October 16th, 2023: *Coral Harbour, Nunavut* - The Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) North has filed a complaint against the Coral Harbour Housing Authority. The complaint, filed with the Canada Industrial Relations Board, claims that the housing authority has committed an illegal lockout in violation of subsection 89(1) of the Canada Labour Code.

Following a vote by PSAC/Nunavut Employees Union (NEU) members to authorize legal strike action, the Coral Harbour Housing Authority, immediately took steps to lay off all casual employees represented by PSAC/NEU. This erodes over 40% of the Coral Harbour bargaining unit.

“This attack on worker rights is in clear contradiction to Canadian law,” states Jason Rochon, President of the Nunavut Employees Union. “These actions also echo the despicable and cowardly tactics used against workers during the Iqaluit Housing Strike. We will continue to fight for worker’s basic rights now with as much dedication as we showed during that strike.”

PSAC North adds that in enacting this lockout, the Coral Harbour Housing Authority has also violated the statutory freeze provisions in subsection 50(b) of the Canada Labour Code and that it committed unfair labour practices. Specifically, the union claims the housing authority is interfering with the administration of a trade union and laying off employees for participating in a trade union, participating in a strike, and exercising rights (a violation of subsections 94(1) and 94(3) of the Code).

“These actions are cruel and unacceptable,” states Josee-Anne Spirito, PSAC North Regional Executive Vice President. “We will stand with Coral Harbour Housing Authority workers who want nothing more than the same basic standards that were agreed to in the Iqaluit Housing Authority agreement.”

The filed complaint also states that the employer enacted layoffs tainted by anti-union animus. It states that the employer left no doubt through both its verbal and written communications that its actions were directly connected with the Union’s strike vote and the bargaining process, confirming on numerous occasions that its actions were driven by the likelihood of a strike and the Union’s demands at the bargaining table. A day after the Union filed the complaint, the employer notified the Union and employees that they were changing the working conditions as the statutory freeze period was ended. This means that members will have no collective agreement that protects them effective October 11th. By doing that, the employer is pushing members to go on strike and closing options for conversations, despite the Union’s expressed desire to negotiate in good faith.

[As stated previously Coral Harbour Housing Authority workers have voted overwhelmingly in favour of strike.](#) PSAC North and the NEU have repeated their call for Minister of Labour Seamus O’Regan and the federal government to step in and halt the use of scab labour during strikes. They also repeat their call on the Nunavut Housing Corporation to consistently step in and prevent strikes from occurring by ensuring employers offer fair deals to their workers.

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For media inquiries, contact: James Kaylor: Communications Officer - Nunavut Employees Union
Phone: 867.222.2436 Email: james@neu.ca